

2009/2010 PARENT HANDBOOK

WHAT IS ZAREINU?

Zareinu is a Jewish Day School and treatment centre that provides special education and therapies to a population of children with a wide range of physical and developmental challenges.

- Zareinu provides on-site therapy and education.
- Each individually designed student program meets the unique needs of children between the ages of birth and 21 years of age.
- Zareinu is a model-teaching centre for university programs and community colleges to train therapists and special education students.
- Zareinu offers the most up-to-date therapeutic techniques as well as creating new and innovative strategies.
- Zareinu provides a setting rich in Jewish tradition and teachings.

Zareinu strives to, whenever possible, encourage inclusion through opportunities for supported integration.

Zareinu looks towards increasing acceptance of children with special needs in the community.

ZAREINU AS A MODEL TEACHING CENTRE AND CLINIC

Zareinu is used as a practicum placement for students from: The Faculties of Education, Social Work, and Medicine; and Programmes in Early Childhood Education, Developmental Service Work, and Co-operative Education. In addition, Zareinu is a teaching clinic for students in Physical, Occupational, Speech and Language Pathology, and Music therapies.

PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy is based on the belief that each "special child" is a valuable member of our community and has the right to an adapted education, opportunities for improving life skills, communication and our respect for their strengths, as well as, a focus on their needs. The family must be an integral part of our efforts; their input treated with respect and their participation in planning individual programs for their child is encouraged. We believe that every child has potential and deserves our united efforts in providing therapies and learning strategies that will improve the quality of life for each child and family at Zareinu.

PROGRAMS OFFERED

Infant Intervention Program

- Infant Intervention Program – This program provides parents and their babies with a program that includes assessment, activities and therapies directed by an infant interventionist, speech and language pathologist and occupational, physical and music therapists. Ages: Birth to 2 years old. 2 mornings per week.

Diagnostic Preschool Program

- Nursery Program – This stimulating class is a therapy-based, early childhood educational setting with a 2:1 student to teacher ratio. It provides intensive individual programming as well as a Jewish preschool curriculum. The staff includes specialized early childhood educators, life skill teachers, teacher assistants and the full team of Zareinu therapists. Ages: 2-5 years old. Full or part time attendance.

Special Education Classes

Intensive programs provide a small staff/student ratio, special education teachers and therapists to enhance life skills and learning opportunities. Speech and language pathologists offer support and/or alternative methods of augmentative communication, signing, picture symbols. Occupational therapists enable students to access the curriculum beyond traditional pencil and paper activities. Students who are partially integrated into public or private schools receive support from teachers and therapists in their inclusive setting. These classrooms are explained in more detail below:

- *Mild/Moderate Intellectual Disability* - Primary (grades K – 8) - These classes operate as traditional Hebrew Day Schools offering ½ day adapted Hebrew and English curricula and are staffed by special education teachers and therapists who use a variety of reading and math remedial programs to meet individual needs. Partial integration into a day school is often part of the programming.
- *Classroom for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder* (grades 1-8) - This unique program offers state of the art research and supported educational and therapeutic strategies to children with severe social and communication disorders.
- *Secondary: Life Skills Program* (ages 14 – 17) – The emphasis in this program is on promoting life skills and nurturing independence in a Jewish Context. Functional reading and math skills are worked on.
- *Secondary: Vocational* (ages 18-22) – Mornings in this pilot program are devoted to Jewish Studies, afternoons to vocational training and readiness. The vocational program is being conducted in cooperation with Jewish Vocational Services.

GENERAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

The preschool program is developed through thematic units and concepts that reinforce social, intellectual, physical, and emotional growth. Children are exposed to new learning situations through modified, “hands on” activities. The adapted learning environment provides children with an opportunity to understand basic and abstract concepts, experiment, create, construct, explore, plan, set goals, and solve problems. Students develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in language rich environments. They use mathematics in everyday tasks to practice problem solving and reinforce the concepts of number sense, numeracy, spatial sense, and geometry. Science is investigated in the classroom through exploration, prediction, questioning, classifying and gathering information. Children are encouraged to use their growing awareness of others while relating to their peers by participating in social and co-operative activities.

The school-aged program utilizes direct instruction and thematic units. The General Studies curriculum follows the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines as described below:

- *Language Arts* - Students are expected to develop effective oral and visual communication with others and their environment. They are taught phonetic based systems of reading and writing, and learn to integrate these skills in meaningful and purposeful contexts. They further develop these skills through the writing process to develop the ability to organize ideas, reason, and apply language conventions.
- *Mathematics* - Students are expected to develop skills in order to problem solve, understand concepts, and apply mathematical procedures. They will be exposed to, and learn appropriate to their development, number sense and numeration, measurement, geometry, patterning, and data collection. They will develop these skills in meaningful and purposeful contexts.
- *Social Studies* - It is expected that students will be exposed to a variety of strands to develop their skills of research and inquiry, according to their development levels. Students learn about Canada and World Connection, and Heritage and Citizenship subject areas in meaningful and purposeful contexts, and will utilize language arts skills to demonstrate their knowledge.

JEWISH STUDIES CURRICULUM

Students will have the opportunity to learn and be immersed in Jewish values and culture including Davening and Siddur skills, Hebrew reading, Hebrew language (reading and translating), Chumash, Dinim, Pirkei Avot, Hebrew script reading and writing, Midos Tovos and Parsha. They are exposed to Jewish life experiences through community and shul visits, heritage traditions and holidays. The students receive in-class instruction and remedial services.

THERAPIES AT ZAREINU

Our staff creates a therapeutic environment for their students using a transdisciplinary model. Developmental objectives created by teachers and therapists are addressed individually and in groups throughout the school day in both formal and informal settings with the help of everyone working with the children. We believe that therapeutic goals can only be reached if they are practiced and reviewed in a variety of ways every school day. Individual and group therapy sessions are scheduled weekly for students based upon their IEP objectives. Sometimes, however, scheduled sessions may not take place because of other school activities or the absence of the therapist. These sessions will only be made up if we anticipate a prolonged absence of the therapist.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ADMISSIONS & TUITION POLICY

In order to ensure a place for a child, the following steps need to be followed:

1. Payment of the registration fee before June 1st of the current school year.
2. Post dated cheques, payable on the 1st or the 15th of the month for the full amount of the tuition are to be delivered to the school prior to a child's placement.
3. No child may begin the program if there is an outstanding tuition balance from a prior year.

4. If a child leaves the program during the middle of the year, tuition cannot be refunded as a result of the commitments made to staff. Tuition may only be refunded in extraordinary circumstances.
5. Zareinu is a partner with the Mercaz. If a parent is unable to pay the full tuition and requires a subsidy, a completed subsidy application form must be submitted. If a family has children in other day schools, those schools will be contacted in order to determine the total family tuition obligation. The family will then be advised regarding the tuition fee.
6. Any questions regarding financial arrangements should be directed to Randy Spiegel, Executive Director, and will be addressed by the Admissions and Tuition Committee.

Parents must agree to Zareinu's Admission & Tuition Policy and confirm by checking the appropriate box on the Student Application.

Zareinu reserves the right to dismiss a child should the school be unable to provide adequate services for that student. If the family requires, Zareinu will help the parents find a more suitable setting for their child. At the parent's request, Zareinu staff will agree to remain in contact with the family and the new setting to facilitate a child's well-being during transition.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival – School Programs begin promptly at 9 a.m. Please notify school if a child will be late, particularly if he/she are sent by bus, taxi, carpool, etc. Every child's safe arrival is a priority.

Dismissal – School ends at 3:30 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays, through the year.

Friday Dismissal times:

Sept. 11 – dismissal is 3:00 p.m.

Nov. 6 – 2:00 p.m. Friday dismissal begins

April 9 – 3:00 p.m. Friday dismissal begins

Every child's safety is important to Zareinu. Please notify the office if anyone new will be picking up the child. It is essential that children are picked up on time at the end of the day.

Please note: Preschool Program – Arrival and dismissal times are flexible.

Absence – Please inform the office prior to any absences.

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

Parents should always feel free to call the office to arrange a phone call or meeting with any of Zareinu's team, if they have questions or concerns. Therapists will contact the parents regularly to touch base.

Progress Reporting will be available through parent/team meetings. After an individual educational (IEP) and an individual service plan (ISP) for therapies have been created, the school will invite parents to share ideas and review these plans midterm, in the late fall and once again in the early spring. These sessions will be followed by written reports. Although these are the officially designated times, the staff is happy to share ideas and address concerns as they arise.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Staff is available to care for your children beginning at 8:00 AM and from 3:30 – 5:30 PM for a fee on a prearranged basis. This service will cost \$200 per morning per year and \$400 per afternoon per year. We will require payment in advance and there will be no refunds for absences because of our fixed costs in hiring supervisory staff.

DRESS CODE

In keeping with the Orthodox traditions of Zareinu, female staff are asked to wear dresses or skirts and tops with a modest neckline. Men should wear a kippah/head covering.

FIRE AND EVACUATION PLAN

The Fire Department has approved Zareinu's Fire Plans in the event of an emergency. The evacuation designation for an emergency (i.e. bomb threat) would be the Bernard Betel Centre at 1003 Steeles Avenue. Fire drills are held according to the York Region Fire Department's expectations.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Staff is offered training in CPR, First Aid and C.P.I.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Dangerous Allergies - Some students entering our building are highly allergic to peanut and nut products. These children can have a fatal reaction to the smallest trace of a substance such as peanut butter. In order to provide a safe environment for the students of Zareinu, the school has instituted a NO PEANUT/NUT POLICY.

In order to implement this policy, the school asks you not to send children to school with ANY foods containing peanuts or nuts. Zareinu regrets the inconvenience that this policy may cause for some parents and students. However, the school hopes that you understand the dangers that this type of allergy can pose. As it is difficult to monitor all food being brought into the building, please cooperate with Zareinu in this matter.

Substitutes: Suggested nutritional and menu substitutes: salad, eggs, salmon and tuna salad, macaroni and cheese.

Please inform the principal – in written form – about any other allergies a child has or emergency medications (EpiPen, puffers, ventilators) which are required during the school day.

Emergency Information – Make sure the school is notified immediately whenever there is a change in the contact persons for emergencies. Please make sure that Health records include updated information.

First Aid - The office takes care of minor injuries, superficial cuts, etc. If indications are that the injury is more severe, parents will be notified. If, in the judgment of the school, the matter requires medical attention, we will insist that a parent arrange to pick up the child immediately. In deciding on the appropriate line of action in each particular case, school staff exercises judgment with utmost care. Wherever possible, we must consider the well being of all the children in the classroom and children who present as being unwell will be sent home.

If special medical conditions apply, please notify the office of the details of the condition and emergency procedures to be followed. If a child has any condition potentially requiring the use of an **EpiPen**, please ensure that the expiry date is carefully monitored.

There are times when a child **must** be taken home or kept home. We offer the following as guidelines:

If a child has any of the following symptoms: fever, sore throat, earaches, stomach pains, nausea, unusual rashes – check carefully with the pediatrician to evaluate the condition. Sending children to school with these symptoms or even with just a "bad common cold" can impede the child's own recovery and can also spread the sickness to others. If these or any other symptoms of illness are noticed, contagious or otherwise, parents will be notified. If, in the school's judgment, there is any likelihood of a child infecting other children, parents will be asked to collect the child from school. If a child continually exhibits serious symptoms, a doctor's note or contact may be requested to better understand the child's needs. Children

who are vomiting or who have diarrhea must be kept home for **24 hrs.** until clear of all symptoms according to Ministry requirements.

Please notify the office immediately if a child contracts any communicable disease. Chicken pox and measles are the most common. Zareinu follows the Public Health regulations as to how many days must elapse before a student is allowed to return to school after a communicable illness.

Please remember that some of our students are very medically vulnerable. Proximity to children with coughs, colds and fevers can lead to their contracting serious illnesses. **If we believe that a child has a contagious illness, the parent will be notified and the student will be isolated from others until the parent arrives.** Please cooperate with the school in preventing the spread of illness to students as well as to staff members.

Immunization – Schools are mandated by the Public Health Department to require immunization of students. Health Inspectors come to the schools to check on this. They have the legal right to exclude from school any student who has not complied with regulations. Please ensure that all forms sent home in this regard are returned promptly.

Medications – Whenever possible, parents should request that their physician schedule medication to be taken before the student leaves for school or when the student arrives home. When this is not possible, the school will cooperate in dispensing medication. Prescription medication must arrive in the original bottle. If meds are Tylenol, cough medicine, etc., please supply the medication and instructions and a signed medication form (available at the office). Preschool parents must include a note from their doctor prescribing non prescription medication.

Parents are requested to follow Zareinu's Behaviour Management Policies while on school property. Any parents needing assistance may request this, as needed.

KOSHER FOOD

Please bring in kosher food for lunch. Dairy is requested. Please contact Goldie Kass if you have any questions about Kashruth (Jewish Dietary Laws).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS (2 per year)

Special Education Staff, Teacher Assistants and therapists keep up to date by attending conferences, as well as being invited to provide workshops and lectures for the many children's agencies with whom Zareinu is affiliated.

SCHOOL CLOSING

School closing is a rare occurrence, however, when this does happen, schools affiliated with the Board of Jewish Education follow the decision of a specific committee. Radio stations make the announcement. They will be posted in the fall.

SMOKING POLICY

According to the Smoke Free Ontario Act, no person is permitted to smoke in the school building or parts of the school building. A second infraction will be reported to York Region Public Health Staff. Violation of this policy could result in a \$5,000.00 fine.

SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

Our Social Workers provide guidance and support to families regarding Ministry funding, transitions and support dealing with difficult family issues that relate to the daily challenges of providing for their child(ren) with special needs.

VOLUNTEERS

The many wonderful volunteers at Zareinu are orientated with a 4 part workshop series delivered by Zareinu's therapists and teachers. Our volunteer coordinator sources, interviews and monitors this valuable group of caring volunteers. If you know of anyone interested in volunteering, please call Mrs. Grubner at 416-783-7867.

IMPORTANT AUTUMN DATES

Tuesday September 8	First day of School
Monday September 14	Open House
Tuesday October 6	Family Sukkah Party
Friday November 6	Early Winter Dismissal begins